



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

**County of Los Angeles**  
**Sheriff's Department Headquarters**  
**4700 Ramona Boulevard**  
**Monterey Park, California 91754-2169**



August 4, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Members of the Civil Grand Jury:

**RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE 2009-10  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY**

Attached is the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (Department) response to the 2009-10 Civil Grand Jury Report recommendations (Attachment A). The Civil Grand Jury's areas of interest specific to the Department included our participation in the reporting of child abuse, random drug testing, staffing of the crime lab, inmate health care, and the use of video-conferencing technology.

Should you have questions regarding our response, please contact Division Director Victor Rampulla at (323) 526-5357.

Sincerely,

  
LEROY D. BACA  
SHERIFF

*A Tradition of Service*

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
CHILD ABUSE REPORTING AND RESPONSE

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

The Office of the District Attorney, Department of Child and Family Services and LASD should lead an effort to develop a Memorandum of Understanding or Operational Agreement, as appropriate, among all of the parties within Los Angeles County involved in the E-SCAR system for communicating cases of suspected child abuse.

RESPONSE

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) agrees with this recommendation. The recommendation will be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting and if approved, a plan to develop a Memorandum of Understanding will be started.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

The E-SCAR Memorandum of Understanding/Operational Agreement should define the roles of the participants as to the communication and transmission of data and information among themselves and their coordination of responses. Time-to-respond and best practices standards should be established by the DA, DCFS, LASD and the other parties to the Memorandum of Understanding/Operational Agreement for use as benchmarks by the participants. The Memorandum/Agreement should not, however, attempt to define or dictate the operations of the various groups as to their internal processes and protocols used in investigating, prosecuting or resolving reported child abuse allegations.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation. LASD is currently communicating with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and other law enforcement agencies with regard to best practices. Additionally, LASD recommends as standard practice that all Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Reporting System (E-SCARS) be handled as a "call for service" and each E-SCAR be given the initial patrol response, appropriate for the given information on the E-SCAR. LASD also recommends establishing protocols and training with all affected agencies/units with regard to cross-reporting to DCFS when it has been determined a crime has occurred or is suspected to have occurred.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

The DA's Office, DCFS, and LASD should lead an effort to establish an expanded, permanent Steering Committee composed of representatives of the various agencies that participate in the E-SCAR process to oversee the system from the standpoint of enhancements, user friendliness and effectiveness of the various stakeholders.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation and is currently working within the above mentioned recommendation. The current Steering Committee is comprised of personnel from the District Attorney's Office (DA), DCFS, and LASD. The Steering Committee is currently holding periodic meetings with other law enforcement agencies to address the E-SCAR concerns.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4

The Steering Committee as a body should assure that the system receives optimal use and is enhanced periodically.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation. All of the listed enhancement items are in place and LASD continues to work toward a more productive and efficient system, which will benefit all concerned. Additionally, the E-SCAR system currently has a section of frequently asked questions for reference by E-SCAR users.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 7

The DA's Office, DCFS, and LASD should expand the awareness of all law enforcement personnel as to their roles as Mandated Reporters especially as the requirement to cross-report suspected child abuse or endangerment cases encountered in the field.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation. LASD's Special Victims Bureau (SVB) has included the mentioned training and information in its Intranet website. Additionally, LASD continually reinforces this information in Sergeant and Lieutenant Field Operations School. SVB also conducts training at patrol station briefings where this material is covered. Field Operations Support Services has committed to create a Sheriff's Department "Newsletter" that will be used to communicate various information to employees, including information like this.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 9

As demonstrated at the Palmdale Sheriff's Station, co-location of DCFS social workers at law enforcement facilities has helped foster better cooperation and more effective communication between the two groups. LASD and DCFS should make a thorough evaluation of this approach and expand the concept wherever practical.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation and will work with DCFS to determine the feasibility of expanding the co-location program.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
CITY OF PALMDALE

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

The 2009-10 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department review this program and act as the coordinator for implementation throughout the County of Los Angeles.

RESPONSE

LASD has reviewed the program and is very proud of the successes experienced by Palmdale's Partners Against Crime (PAC). Whenever practical, LASD will continue to implement or expand similar programs throughout the County. One example of an existing program is the Countywide Community Oriented Policing Team (COPS) Abatement Team which partners COPS deputies with members of other County agencies (such as the Fire Department, Building and Safety, and graffiti abatement) to address criminal activity and quality of life issues throughout our communities. One of the advantages PAC has utilized is the ability to co-locate with partnering agencies within Palmdale Sheriff's Station's jurisdiction. This model has been studied by LASD's Facilities Planning Bureau and will be modeled in the construction of new stations to the extent the construction budget and site size allow.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
DRUG FREE WORK ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

LASD Risk Management Department should resume random drug testing.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation and is the process of hiring a contract employee to conduct the testing. It is anticipated that random testing will resume within the next two months.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5

The Los Angeles County Office of Safety Police (OSP) public Hotline should be integrated into the Sheriff's Department and continue to function. Develop and maintain a categorized log of all calls. Initiate a county wide awareness program relative to the ability of the Hotline to anonymously report job related abuses.

RESPONSE

LASD discussed the "Hotline" with former Office of Public Safety (OPS) Acting Chief Steve Lieberman as part of the transition of OPS services to LASD. Mr. Lieberman explained that OPS did not maintain a Hotline to specifically report drug use or other abuses by County employees. He believes the Grand Jury is referring to signs posted in the Civic Center, which now are inscribed with the phone number to LASD, for anyone to call if there is a need for police assistance. However, this is not an anonymous hotline. If someone should call the dispatch center and report a problem involving drug abuse by a County employee, deputies from the LASD County Services Bureau will respond and appropriate police action will be taken, or the complainant will be referred to the appropriate department for investigation.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
FORENSICS

RECOMMENDATION

Fill allocated positions for DNA technicians to effectively reduce laboratory backlog.

RESPONSE

In the time since the Civil Grand Jury's initial investigation, LASD has obtained permission through the Board of Supervisors to hire a supervisor and 5 technical positions for the DNA unit. Employees have been hired to fill all 47 positions allocated to the unit and personnel have either begun employment or are in the background process. Through these additions, the supervisory ratio will meet the recommended ratio of 1:8.

Eight individuals have recently completed DNA training for a total of 35 trained examiners. Six individuals are currently in training and the remaining 6 untrained individuals prepare sexual assault kits from the backlog for shipment to outsourced contractors. They will begin training within the next 2 months, once all sexual assault kits from the backlog have been outsourced to the contractors.

The addition of trained personnel along with the implementation of automated procedures will effectively reduce the laboratory backlog.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
INMATE HEALTHCARE

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

The Executive Management of both the Sheriff's Department and LAC+USC should establish a task force to review all of the medical services which are currently out-sourced by Twin Towers with the goal of integrating those services into the LAC+USC operations. This would be particularly relevant to Laboratory and Pharmacy which could possibly be established as satellites of LAC+USC's services. Twin Towers could also possibly piggyback on the existing contracts that LAC+USC currently has for CT and MRI services if appropriate.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation and will meet with LAC+USC Medical staff to discuss the Grand Jury recommendations. Integration of services and piggyback on existing LAC+USC contracts will be discussed to determine if, and to what extent, these recommendations are feasible.

RECOMMENDATION NO.2

To streamline the hiring process, the Sheriff's Department should speed up the background investigation process for physicians hired by Twin Towers.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation and has begun to streamline the background process. The requirement for applicants to provide various medical school records for Medical Doctorate degree, residency and fellowship has been discontinued. Since registration with the State of California Medical Board and Board Certification with a specialty board is part of the minimum qualifications for all physician candidates, the request for school transcripts is unnecessary. Academic records can be requested during the privileging process, if necessary.

RECOMMENDATION NO.3

The Executive Management of both the Sheriff's Department and LAC+USC should consider the possibility of integrating the computerized Medical Records systems of Twin Towers and LAC+USC as a pilot project for future integration of the medical records of all the DHS medical facilities.



RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation, however, due to current configurations and age of the systems in use, integration is not feasible at this time. Although not integrated, LASD and LAC+USC have access to each other's electronic medical record systems at their respective designated locations.

RECOMMENDATION NO.4

LAC+USC Medical Center and Twin Towers should institute a program of informal observation visits for medical personnel from LAC+USC through the Twin Towers medical facility to provide familiarity with the unique issues relating to medical services in an incarceration setting.

RESPONSE

LASD agrees with this recommendation. LAC+USC and LASD have agreed that touring each other's facilities would provide new staff the opportunity to understand, with clarity, the function and role of each Department.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
FOR VIDEO-CONFERENCING TECHNOLOGY

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1:

The District Attorney of the County of Los Angeles, the Chief Executive Officer of the County of Los Angeles, the Public Defender of the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department should draft/complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Countywide Video-Conferencing Technology Hub System. The MOU should include:

- A consensus of each participant's involvement with its role clearly defined and stated.
- A well defined dispute resolution process.
- A detailed workflow statement.
- The cost agreement between the participants allocated in a shared pool.
- The establishment of an Oversight Committee with representatives from each participating department, agency or individual.

RESPONSE:

LASD agrees with the goals of the recommendation. However, we would like to note that significant progress has been made toward increasing the use of video technology both within LASD and with other criminal justice organizations.

RECOMMENDATION NO 2:

The Oversight Committee for the Countywide Video-Conferencing Technology Hub System should include:

- A representative from the District Attorney of the County of Los Angeles, the Chief Executive Officer of the County of Los Angeles, the Public Defender of the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department with authority to negotiate and make decisions that are involved in the entire process.
- Meetings scheduled on a monthly basis.
- Quarterly meetings with public attendance.
- Published minutes.

- Authority to interact with State and Federal agencies.
- Ability to expand Video-Conferencing Technology on a Countywide basis.

RESPONSE:

LASD agrees with the goals of the recommendation. However, we would like to note that significant progress has been made toward increasing the use of video technology both within LASD and with other criminal justice organizations.

RECOMMENDATION NO 3:

The District Attorney of the County of Los Angeles, the Chief Executive Officer of the County of Los Angeles, the Public Defender of the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department should draft a Five-Year Strategic Plan for a Countywide Video-Conferencing Technology Hub System that includes the following:

- Visitations
- Interviews
- Conferencing

RESPONSE:

LASD agrees with the goals of the recommendation. However, we would like to note that significant progress has been made toward increasing the use of video technology both within LASD and with other criminal justice organizations.

Coordination Among County Criminal Justice Agencies

Recognizing the need for coordination among criminal justice agencies, the County created the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC), which is chaired by a member of the Board of Supervisors. One of CCJCC's sub-committees is the Information Systems Advisory Body (ISAB), which is tasked with researching, coordinating, and implementing information systems of benefit to multiple criminal justice agencies. Among other areas, they regularly coordinate efforts in the use of video technology and e-documents.

ISAB, chaired by Sheriff Baca, currently coordinates monthly meetings to foster video use among County agencies. One of the shared efforts involved implementing video arraignment at the Glendale Court to provide for the arraignment of inmates without the need to physically transport them to court.

The group is also working toward coordinating efforts and developing standards. An oversight committee has been established, looking at mid-term strategic plans and a possible MOU. LASD is an integral part of these efforts.

### LASD's Efforts

LASD is often at the forefront of implementing technology. Video usage has increased dramatically within LASD.

- Video-conferencing is available within LASD at over 40 sites, permitting video conferences to be held both within LASD and with other County entities. A video bridge and meeting place appliance will greatly improve the ability to host multiple, concurrent conferences. A solution has been identified and funding is being sought to procure it.
- The ability to video conference with outside entities is being developed. Once implemented, this will allow video conferences with entities outside of the County via the public telephone network.
- LASD is reviewing solutions to permit video to be streamed to the public through lasd.org.
- LASD's Data Systems Bureau is working with investigators and technical video evidence experts on a standard video implementation for use in interview rooms.

In addition, LASD is actively participating in other areas noted by the Civil Grand Jury.

- Implementation of e-Subpoena: The system currently allows the District Attorney's Office to send subpoenas electronically to LASD and have them distributed to the appropriate recipients. This will eventually expand to other agencies.
- Development of e-Document standards: LASD currently stores crime reports as electronic images. A project is underway to improve and expand the system.
- Electronic filing: LASD is working with the District Attorney's Office to move toward electronic filing of cases.
- E-Discovery: LASD is working with other criminal justice agencies to deliver discovery documents electronically.

### OVERALL

Both the County and LASD are actively pursuing video and other technologies to reduce costs, improve effectiveness, and enhance safety. Many of these efforts are beneficial, but are currently available on a limited basis. We are working to expand our capabilities. As the systems expand, we are placing increasing emphasis on improving interactions with the public – ranging from private attorneys interviewing their clients in jail via video to public inmate visiting; from expanding video-conferencing to presenting large conferences to the public; and from increasing public awareness to providing live news feeds.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2009-2010 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
DETENTION

FINDING

Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station jail was found to be non-compliant due to food, refuse, and clothing found in a shower stall three hours after breakfast.

RESPONSE

LASD partially disagrees with the finding of non-compliance. The inspectors first toured Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station's jail on October 13, 2009. At the time of the tour, there was leftover breakfast food, refuse, and linens left on the floor from the recent processing and transfer of 23 inmates to Newhall Court. The jail collateral lieutenant told the inspectors he would take immediate steps to rectify the pickup of the meals and update and reemphasize the cleaning schedule. The inspectors said they would return to the station unannounced and conduct a follow-up inspection.

The lieutenant sent an e-mail mandating the time and protocols for clearing the breakfast meal, and emphasizing cleanliness in the jail. A new cleaning schedule for the jail was developed and distributed to all of the jailers. All station sergeants and lieutenants were advised of the Grand Jury's inspection and the direction given to the jailers. On November 17, 2009, the inspectors returned to Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station and inspected the jail for cleanliness. The jail was very clean and received favorable comments from the inspectors.

Based on the overall results of the two inspections, LASD feels the jail deserved a rating of "compliant."